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Eloquent Sermon Delivered by Dr. A. Barbour, Galveston, Tex., July 18, at First Baptist Church, Second Anniversary Service of the Pastorate of E. Arlington Wilson, Ph. B., D. D.

"And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge stand in the gap before me for the land."

Subject: The power of personality. Before I shall begin to discuss this text and subject, permit me to say this as I have observed the life and character and the power of Pastor Wilson, as a preacher and a pastor: I want to congratulate these who are responsible for having the foresight and the willingness of spirit to respond to the guidance of the Holy Spirit when He gave this man of God to this field.

Today, as in that bygone time of which my text is a reminiscence God Almighty sitting high upon His Throne and lifted up above all human rule and authority and above the rise and progress, the decadence and downfall of nations: God Almighty, I say, seeks, is ever seeking men to catch His thought, to set forward His Kingdom to interpret His Will, to do His bidding and to set forward His Kingdom on the earth, that Kingdom which, first and above all, is righteousness.

Personal character, after all, is the supreme factor in the evolution of human history, whether you look at the particular or the general, whether you are thinking of the individual, the community, the nation or the race. Back of all lies human character, and when we say human character we mean the separate and distinct character which constitutes the moral personality of individual men. This virtue your pastor is the embodiment.

There is ground for congratulation and encouragement as regards to our advancement along this line of late. There has been a very marked increase of public interest in this matter of personality. The Negroes have become awakened to the importance of knowing what manner of men they shall put in places of trust and power. And upon you I heap congratulations for having secured the services of this distinguished minister and pastor.

The success of my beloved Dr. Wilson that has come to you during your pastorate here, has been because you have a personality of purpose in the presentation of the truth that you have received from Him who has sent you. Like the apostle of old who possesses the same thrilling purpose, when he said "I determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified." That one thing covered the whole range of his being: thoughts, words, acts and that, is the sacrifice of Jesus. The great truth that you have preached the truth of the Cross, has filled not only this proud consecrated church, but it has permeated and thrilled the whole city of Muskogee, with a Christian consciousness that has stirred the very depths of the inmost souls of men, constrains them, and drives them to proclaim the most marvellous facts in all Divine and human history. God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Not through a strange mysterious incarnation, though Christ was God manifested in the flesh; nor through the illumination of a matchless doctrine, though of Christ it was said, "Never a Man Spoke Like This Man."

My text shows that it is God Almighty that gives to any church or

community, or race or nation the man that must sway the hearts of the people. We have many characteristics portrayed in men. Your learned pastor does not possess the temperament of a Roosevelt whose war-like characteristics swayed not only the commonwealth of America, but the whole civilized nations of the world, but like the beloved of Our Blessed Lord that leaned upon His bosom lovable in disposition, and meek in his presentation of the truth, and learned in his exegesis. So when God Almighty looked upon this field some two years ago, I imagine that He said what is expressed in this our text: "And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before for the Land."

Oh, my beloved, there never was an age in the history of the world that we stand so much in need of men and women as we do now, especially in our pulpits. Why do we name specifically the pulpit for the reason the gospel deals with that part of the human being that is the most vital. Nothing concerns man more than the mighty thought as to "Where he shall spend eternity." Therefore all the deductions of science and philosophy, etc., shall not concern man more than eternity. So men or women who shall build up a high way and stand in the gap as our text suggests, must be placed there by God Almighty. Not only do I call upon you to be proud that through the Providence of the Almighty God was this great man given to you that he might sway his wonderful personality for the magnification of the cross, but I speak in behalf of all the Baptists in Oklahoma when I say that you have added to your ranks a distinguished personage that has been our highest delight to appreciate. As a presiding officer of two distinguished bodies that your honored pastor has the high privilege of being a member, I confess to you that we have indeed as well as yourselves been wonderfully blessed, by having his wonderful counsel and learned experience.

My text says: "God Sought for a Man." God has always sought for men, and he still is seeking for men, and indeed no man can fill the place this honored man has filled with credit to himself, with most distinguished honor to his parish. It is the Almighty that must seek men.

Dr. Arlington Wilson, I am sure that you are familiar with the thought that I am going to advance now: There is in every life the period of silence. There are no convictions; there are no responses for the reason that there is no speaking universe for that life. Then follows the period in which voices ring out in the twilight and the awakened spirit rushes on into mistaken interpretations. But for the true man the process does not stop here. The great hour comes in which the voice of God is heard in an understanding heart. So when God spake to you, with an understanding heart, you said like Samuel, "Speak Lord, thy servant heareth Thee." Why? The will of God was the foremost thought in your mind. The gospel tools God had given you were given as a golden opportunity for a well rendered service; your personality presents a wonderful mastery; self development; and truly it should be, to be God's true servant requires a life of self devotion, of putting your best self at the point of need, striving in all sacred and sacrificial uses of life to bless the world, to

uplift and redeem, and fill up your body with that which is lacking of the affections of Christ.

So I repeat that I feel myself highly honored to be chosen to speak these words of praise at this anniversary in honor to this distinguished preacher and pastor. And I close with these words:

There is no touch of servility in Christian discipleship. It is dignified and exalted. We are to reign in life, that is, in this life; to reign over sin and temptation, over the flesh with the affections and lust, over the prince of the power of the air.

We get the necessary equipment through the grace of Christ. In our Father's house on high there shall also be the blending of loyalty, Lordship shall merge with servanthip, rulership with allegiance, dominion with helpfulness.

The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him. An eternity of loving service was to Thomas Kemps the favorite thought of the ageless life. And it is the life of service to which we are called in this world. The Savior of men wrought out His career along this line. He interpreted life in terms of service. This is the law for His followers, and in the whole hearted application of this law do they procure for themselves and others a rich installment of the blessedness to be fully known in the halls of Zion.

In the matchless beauty, wonderful wealth, and intimate sweetness,

does the Divine approach the human, even as a bride adorned for her husband; and if in one aspect, life is a battle field in which we must face the stern and wrestle with the strong, it should also be greeted and used by the children of a thrilling destiny as a constant marriage ceremony between Heaven and Earth.

Amen.

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Change of Time

Sunday, July 11

To Joplin, Miami, Fairland, Wagoner.

7:30 A. M.

3:00 P. M.

To Henryetta - Dustin, 6:30 5.00

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